

REMARKS

Minor editorial corrections have been made to the specification. Claims 1, 18, 22, 39, and 43 have been amended. Claims 44 - 46 have been added. No new matter has been introduced with these corrections, amendments, or added claims, which are supported in the specification as originally filed. Claims 1 - 46 are now in the application.

I. Drawing Amendments

As discussed above in "Amendments to the Drawings", the arrows (and their corresponding reference numbers) connecting element 510 to element 520 have been rearranged for improved readability. No new matter has been introduced.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action dated February 11, 2004 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that Claims 1 - 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent 5,862,323 to Blakley et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended their independent Claims 1, 22, and 43 herein to more clearly specify that the user identifier and identifying secret are transmitted from the client over the secure connection. This same information is then propagated from the password synchronization agent to a master registry, if validation of the user's information by a trusted authenticating domain succeeds. (An exception is found in added Claims 44 - 46, where the user provides a new value for the identifying secret, and this new value is substituted prior to the propagation. See p. 28,

Serial No. 09/614,087

-19-

Docket RSW9-2000-0074-US1

lines 14 - 16, where this alternative approach is discussed.) This is distinct from the teachings of Blakley, as will now be described.

Blakley stores passwords as attributes of a registry 102 and in a password repository 112. Either in a push mode or a pull mode, these previously-stored values can be propagated. Applicants' claims do not pertain to propagating already-stored information. Instead, as just described, Applicants' claims are directed toward propagating an identifying secret that has been transmitted from the client (or has been newly-entered, in Claims 44 - 46). Applicants have described Blakley's teachings on p. 8, lines 7 - 14 of their specification. As noted therein, most registries do not allow plaintext passwords to be stored. Applicants further note on p. 8 of their specification that secure registries do not allow retrieval of existing passwords for creating plaintext versions thereof.

Applicants' specification further states on p. 9, lines 14 - 16 that an object of their invention is to provide propagation techniques that "do not make stored security credential values ... accessible, nor a plaintext version thereof". Page 20, lines 5 - 7 also states that Applicants' invention does not require "that the registry stores the security credentials in plaintext form, nor that the registry provides a way to access an original value from which a particular user's stored credentials were created". Page 28, lines 9 - 14 emphasize that the credentials "which the user has entered at 603" are forwarded (i.e., propagated) to the target registries (except for the case where the user enters new credentials, as discussed in lines 14 - 16 of p. 28).

Serial No. 09/614,087

-20-

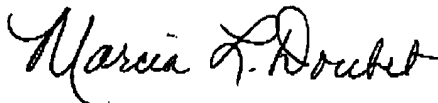
Docket RSW9-2000-0074-US1

This is distinct from Blakley's technique of retrieving an already-stored password and forwarding that value. As noted in the cited passages from Applicants' specification, many registries do not allow that type of retrieval, and thus Applicants' claimed invention propagates the information directly from the PSA at which it was received (after validating that correct information was received). Applicants therefore respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 22, and 43, as amended, are patentable over the reference. Dependent Claims 2 - 21 and 23 - 42 (as well as added dependent Claims 44 - 46) are therefore patentable over the reference as well. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the §102 rejection.

III. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending rejected claims, withdrawal of all presently outstanding rejections, and allowance of all claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment: Replacement Sheet (1)

Serial No. 09/614,087

-21-

Docket RSW9-2000-0074-US1